ALABAMA BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MINUTES

OF THE

EIGHT ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

NEW RIVER

BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD WITH

MT. PLEASANT CHURCH, FAYETTE COUNTY, ALABAMA,

September 6th and 7th, 1878.

The next Session to be held with Mt. Lebanon Church, Five Miles North of Fayette C. H., Alabama, commencing on Saturday before the 2nd Sabbath in October, 1879.

MINUTES.

MT. PLEASANT CHURCH, }
Fayette County, Ala., Sep. 6, 1878.}

1. The New River Baptist Association met in its Eighth Annual Session, with Mt. Pleasant church, commencing on Friday before the 2nd Sabbath in September, 1878. According to previous arrangement, the Introductory Sermon was preached by Eld. G. W. Gravlee, alternate, in the absence of Elder Elijah Howell, from John 17: 20 and 21:—"Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." In which he ably set forth the necessity of unity among the children of God.

2. After recess of an hour, the delegates assembled in the meeting-house, and the Association was called to order by Elder J. B. Huckabee, former Moderator, and prayer was offered.

3. The delegates from the several churches were then enrolled as their names were read from the letters sent up by the several churches.—Brethren J. B. Ferguson and G. W. Gravlee were appointed reading clerks. Elder J. B. Huckabee was elected Moderator, and A. M. Nuckols, Clerk.

4. Offered an opportunity for newly constituted churches, or churches from other Associations, to join this body: Whereupon, Friendship church, from the Tuscaloosa Association, represented by her delegates I. M. Whitney, S. A. G. Winters, and J. P. Patton presented a petitionary letter and a letter of dismission from Tuscaloosa Association, and was duly received and attached to the first district.

5. Invited visiting ministers to seats with us.

6. The Moderator appointed the following committees for the present session: I. On Preaching—P. M. Newton, John Reeves, and deacons of Mt. Pleasant church. II. Arrangements, J. B. Ferguson, A. J. Reeves and I. N. Ashcraft. III. On Finance, M. Shira, J. M. Whitney, and James Dickinson. IV. Nominations, Charles Weeks, Wilson Bell, and James Mills. V. Documents, Elder J. E. Bell, W. B. Shirley, and W. B. Taylor. VI. Temperance, Elder G. W. Gravlee, S. Appling, and J. M. Spann VII. Circular Letter, D. G. Kirkland, G. T. Hassell, and Elder J. B. Ferguson.

7. Called for correspondence from sister Associations: North River responded through her messenger, Elder L. B. Harbin, with letter and minutes. Yellow Creek, through her messengers, J. Taylor and J. M. Stewart, with minutes and letter.—Tuscaloosa, through her messenger, H. W. Cole, with letter and minutes.

Brother Charley Rice from Tuscaloosa Association, and brother Amerson from North River, were received as messengers by motion.

8. Report of committee on preaching, I. N. Ashcraft to preach to-night, followed by Eld. J. E. Bell; Eld L. B. Harbin to preach at 11 o'clock to-morrow, followed by Elder W. L. Jones.

9. Adjourned to 8½ o'clock A. M., to-morrow.

10. Saturday A. M., met according to appointment. Brother Ferguson led in prayer.

11. Committee on Arrangements reported order of business which was adopted, and is as follows: 1st, Read Constitution, Articles of Faith, and Rules of Decorum; 2d, Call names of delegates and mark absentees; 3rd, Call for the report of the corresponding messengers to the North River Association with regard to the matter of complaint against that Association; 4th, Return correspondence; 5th, Call for report of committee on documents; 6th, Call for report of committee on Circular Letter; 7th, Call for report of district meetings; 8th, Call for report of committee on temperance; 9th, Call for report of committee on nominations; 10th, Call for report of Board of Domestic Missions; 11th, Call for report of Sabbath School Board; 12th, Call for Treasurer's report; 13th, Appoint Treasurer; 14th Call for report of committee on finance; 15th, Call for miscellaneous business.

12. Read Constitution, Articles of Faith, and Rules of Decorum.

13. Called names of delegates and marked absentees, as shown by Statistical Table.

14. Called for report of corresponding messengers to the North River Association; whereupon, the Moderator, Elder J. B. Huckabee, reported that our sister, the North River Association, had referred the whole matter of complaint to a committee appointed by that body to investigate the matter. Whereupon, Elder J. E. Bell moved that the messengers from North River Association be requested to state to this body the action of that committee, which was adopted. Whereupon, Elder L. B. Harbin reported in substance, that said committee acquited this Association (New River) and Friendship church, both, of any blame because of a neglect of Mt. Zion church to make certain records. The further consideration of this question was made the special order for the first business in the P. M. session, as the hour for brother L. B. Harbin to fill the stand had arrived.

15. Returned correspondence as follows: *To Tuscaloosa Association*, Elder J. E. Bell, E. Melton, and A. M. Nuckols. *Yellow Creek*, Elder J. B. Huckabee, W. B. Taylor, J. M. Spann, M. Shira, J. A. South, I. N. Ashcraft, A. J. Reeves, and W. B. Shirley. *North River*, Elder J. B. Huckabee, P. M. Newton, Elder J. B. Ferguson, N. B. McGlathery, J. M. Spann, M. Shira, and J. E. Mills. *To the State Convention*, by motion, Elder J. B. Huckabee, Elder J. E. Bell, P. M. Newton, Elder G. W. Gravlee, Samuel Appling, A. J. Reeves, M. Shira, J. M. Spann, P. L. Montgomery, I. N. Ashcraft, Wilson Bell, and Elder J. B. Ferguson.

16. Report of committee on documents. Nothing requiring the attention of the body.

17. Committee on Circular Letter recommended that it be read before the body and adopted; the report was received and adopted, and the Circular Letter ordered to be printed in the minutes.

18. Called for report of District Meetings. First District reported as follows:

First District Meeting to be held with Concord church, Friday before the 4th Sunday in Aug., 1879; Elder J. E. Bell to preach the introductory sermon, Elder E. Howell, alternate. Subject for discussion Saturday morning: "Who are the Primitive Baptist? What is the immediate duty of the ministry and of the churches with reference to a reformation in the practical workings of the churches of this Association?" Opened by L. C. Shirley and E. Melton.

J. E. BELL, Moderator.
A. M. NUCKOLS, Clerk.

2nd District reported as follows:

Second District Meeting to be held with Philadelphia church, commencing Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1879; Elder J. B. Ferguson to preach the introductory sermon, Eld. W. L. Jones, alternate. Elder J. B. Huckabee to preach at 11 o'clock on Sunday. We give the next session of the Association to Mt. Lebanon church. We also petition the Association to change the time of meeting back to Saturday before the second Sunday in October, instead of Friday before the second in September. F. M. CAIN, Mod.

A. J. REEVES, Clerk.

19. J. W. Stewart from North River Association, was received as corresponding messenger from that body, by motion.

20. The time of meeting of this Association was changed according to the request of the Second District, to Saturday before the second Sunday in October.

21. Report of committee on temperance adopted, which reads: We find there is yet reason for complaint of intemperance, and more especially among the youth of the country. Therefore, we would earnestly request the churches to use all lawful means to arrest the use of intoxicating drinks. For the little foxes spoil the vines, and in the moral the Devil cries. G. W. GRAVLEE, Ch'n.

22. Report of committee on nominations adopted as follows: Elder W. L. Jones to preach the introductory sermon, Elder J. B. Ferguson, alternate. Elder J. E. Bell to preach at 11 o'clock on Sunday, Elder G. W. Gravlee, alternate. Elder J. B. Huckabee to write Circular Letter.

Respectfully submitted,
C. M. WEEKS, Chm'n.

23. Report of Executive Board as follows: We, your committee, beg leave to report, that we have done nothing since November. Brother Ferguson labored three months, one appointment a month. We have $4 in money on hand, and a good deal of subscription. We have not tried to collect the subscription. It can be collected if necessary. All of which is respectfully submitted,

D. G. KIRKLAND, Chm'n.

Adjourned one hour.

Assembled at the hour appointed. Eld. W. L. Jones opened by prayer.

24. Committee on preaching reported that Elder J. Taylor was to preach at 2 o'clock; Elder J. E. Bell to preach at night, followed by J. B. Ferguson. Brother Spann excused.

25. Took up the special order for this hour, whereupon Elder J. E. Bell offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That we, the New River Association, think that our sister, the North River Association, has not, in our judgment, met the complaint of this Association, and that we kindly ask them to meet this matter with due regard to us as an Association, in an associated capacity.

Our messengers are authorized to present this matter to the North River Association at their next session, and explain the reasons of our views in the premises.

26. By motion, appointed a Board on Domestic Missions to co-operate with the State Board of Domestic Missions, as follows: J. E. Bell, A. M. Nuckols, A. J. Reeves, F. M. Cain, and I. M. Whitney.

27. Report of Sabbath School Board adopted and Board discharged. The report is as follows: Your Sabbath School Board report that during the past year there has been nothing done by us. We think, that under the circumstances, a Sabbath School Board will do but little good, and to secure permanence in Sabbath School work, the ministers and individual churches must take this work in hand; for the elements to make a Sabbath School a success are available only when found in the neighborhood where located.

Respectfully submitted,

J. E. BELL, Chm'n.

28. Report of Treasurer adopted as follows:

Rec'd for Minute Fund,		$23.00
" for Associational purposes		11.65
" from ex-Treasurer Bell,		4.65
" from Chapel Hill church,		1.00
Total,		$40.30
Paid for printing 550 Minutes,	$23.75	
Clerk's fee for services,	10.00	
Balance on hand,	6.55	
		$40.30

29. Report of Finance committee, as follows: We, your committee on Finance, beg leave to report that we have received for

Minute fund,	$19.70
Association fund,	11.60
State Mission Board,	1.05
Former Treasurer,	6.55
Total,	$38.90

M. SHIRA, Chairman.

Treasurer, after this report was made, received from Mr. Logan 50c., and from Oak Ridge church $1.00, making a total of $40.40.

30. It was ordered by motion, that the Clerk reserve, of the Associational fund, $10 for his services, and distribute the balance of said fund to defray, as far as it would, the expenses of our delegates to the State Convention.

31. It was ordered that the Minutes be deposited at the Probate office for distribution.

32. The following resolution was adopted: Whereas, one of our ministers, to-wit, Elder J. B. Huckabee, has been chalenged by one of the adherents of Alexander Campbell to meet him in public debate on certain doctrines; therefore, *Resolved*, That we, as an association, endorse Eld. J. B. Huckabee as a faithful exponent of the doctrines we believe and teach as Baptist.

33. Resolution of thanks adopted: *Resolved*, That the thanks of this body are due, and are hereby tendered to the Mt. Pleasant church and vicinity, for their very kind and liberal hospitality to us during our stay with them. In this connection we are proud to be able to commend the marked good behavior and respectful attention of the congregation during the session of the body.

34 Minutes were read and adopted.

35. *Resolved*, That we adjourn to

meet with Mt. Lebanon church, five miles north of Fayette C. H., on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in October, 1879. Prayer.

J. B. HUCKABEE, Mod'r.
A. M. NUCKOLS, Clerk.

Paid	for printing Minutes,	$21.00
"	Clerk's fee,	10.00
"	Home Mission Board,	1.05
"	Delegats to State Conv'n,	8.40
		$40.45

NOTE.—The exercises on Sunday deserve a place in the Minute. The morning service commenced about 9½ o'clock by brethren Gravlee and J. E. Bell. The address of brother Bell to the young people, from the Scripture, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God," was pointed, practical, impressive, and we trust did much good. The 11 o'clock sermon was preached by Elder J. B. Huckabee, according to appointment. The theme was, "That the people of God should not stand still and expect God to do the work that he has appointed for them to do, but that they should go forward, as the children of Isreal was commanded to do at the Red Sea." If the admonition of the speaker is heeded, the banner of King Immanuel will move forward once more in this part of the field of battle. The exercises on Sunday night were conducted by brethren J. E. Bell and J. B. Ferguson, during which great solemnity pervaded the congregation, so that, when the opportunity was offered many young men came from the very outskirts of the large crowd, expressing a desire to be remembered in the prayers of the people of God. Services at 2 o'clock by Elder J. B. Ferguson, but the writer was called off and could not make a proper note of it.

Circular Letter.

To the Churches Composing the New River Baptist Association, Greeting:

Dear Brethren.—I propose that we individually and collectively enter into an examination of the justice of our claim to be the churches of Christ. Christ, himself, in speaking of his kingdom or church, before his crucifixion, said my kingdom is not of this world, (that is not worldly in its materials, objects, and designs,) and consequently wholly unlike the kingdoms, governments, and institutions of the world, which are of the world, worldly, carnal,—not Spiritual. It is also unlike all other institutions, in the terms and manner of admission to its blessings and privileges;—and these blessings and privileges, although of inestimable value, and though they are great and grand and eternal in their nature, are offered without money and without price to all who will come and partake of them.

Now, let us examine some of the characteristics of the church as an organized body—a *gospel church.*—First, objectively, it operates on the outside world—on sinners. It is compared to a city that is set upon a hill, the light of which, when lighted up, cannot be hid. It sheds forth a light that attracts the attention of the whole surrounding world; the influence of this light is irresistible; its tendency is to purify, elevate, and make holy—it is the salt of the earth.

When the wicked are present and see the exercises of a *gospel church* in *gospel order*, they cannot feel any less indifferent, to-day, than they could on the day of pentecost; they are either made to cry out, "Men and brethren what must we do to be saved," or else are hardened in wickedness and mock, saying, 'these men are filled with new wine.' Now, subjectively, it is pure, all of one material, no mixture, all pure gold without any alloy.

The seven churches of Asia are called by the Spirit seven golden candlesticks, all of pure gold. It is said to be a high way, a way of holiness, and no unclean thing shall go up thereon. (That is no unrenewed person shall enter therein.) An unconverted person could no more rest at ease in a *gospel* church, exercising *gospel* discipline, to-day, than could Ananias and Sapphira deceive the Holy Spirit in the days of the Apostles; like the man at the marriage feast without the wedding garment on, he would be speechless.

The materials of this body or building are said to be lively stones; every individual stone has its appro-

priate place and importance in the superstructure; not a member in the church of Christ, so weak, so ignorant, that he does not have an important work to do; yea, so important and responsible that no one else can possibly do it for him.

The members of the churches of Christ, under various figures, are represented, all through the New Testament Scriptures, as being fruitful, and those that bare no fruit, are represented as dead branches, deceivers, robbers, thieves, &c., and are to be cut off and cast out.

And even in the Old Testament Scriptures the prophet Issiah speaks of the characteritics of the members of the church in no uncertain terms. "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shall thou be established." Again, "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites." What are some of the fruits of a *gospel* church working in *gospel* order?—Joy, peace, gentleness, longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, brotherly kindness, praying with and for one another; if these be in you and abound, ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful.

The legitimate members of the church of Christ are represented as regarding all things of a worldly nature as but dross, when compared with their privileges, blessings, and duties in their church relationship.

Christ tells his disciples that he who would save his life shall lose it, and he that is willing to lose his life for his sake shall save it. John, in speaking of our love for our brethren, says: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

As to the manner of getting into the church; Christ told Nicodemus, the Jewish ruler, that he must be born again, born of the water and the Spirit. (This was a mystery to Nicodemus, and so it is to every one that has not been thus born.) Christ also says that he is the door, and all that enter by any other way, manner, or means, are robbers and thieves. So we see that the *legitimate* members of a *gospel* church are baptized believers—those who have repented, believed, and been burried with Christ in baptism, from which they have risen to a new life—even a life of obedience to his commands: Called to be saints, all of one faith, and of one practice, even as the Father and Son are one.

The first churches were patterns for all others. By their example we are admonished to be careful to admit none into the church that do not give evidence of genuine conversion, and of being one spirit with the Lord. And by the faithful exercise of a Godly discipline to keep the churches pure, in unity and in peace; that is, reform the erring and purge out the unworthy.

Mr. Mercer says, "Christ as head of his church, has constituted the power to govern *in the body*, according to his laws, for *edification*, and not for destruction; for the preservation of the churches in *purity*, *unity*, and *peace*. But when discipline is neglected or loosely executed, the exact opposite state of things must ensue. Corrupt men, suffered or tolerated in the churches, will seek their own level, and like the *old leaven*, will corrode and corrupt the whole body, and tend to *more ungodliness;* till, by their numbers and influence, the church, *at this or that place*, may become a *mere worldly sanctuary*, or a *synagogue of Satan*."—And then the denunciation of the prophet against Isreal, may be fitly applied to the church, Ezek. 44: 6, 7. "Thus saith the Lord God; O ye house of Isreal, let it suffice you of all your abominations; in that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house——."

The laws given by Chsist, the Great Head of the church, for its government, if faithfully executed, are amply sufficient to protect it from being imposed upon for any considerable length of time, by ungodly men; for he presides in his churches, he holds the stars (the ministers) of the churches in his hands, he presides as judge in his churches, when they sit for the purpose of exercising *Godly* discipline in *gospel* order. The church then, in this capacity, is the highest tri-

bunal on earth; from whose decisions there is no appeal. Rev. 2nd chapter: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not; and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna, write: These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich,) I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Brethren, these things are written for our admonition and instruction in those things which pertain to the church. We learn from these passages that Christ holds his true ministers in his right hand, (the hand of power,) that he walks in the midst of *gospel* churches, that a *gospel* church is an active church, that it labors with patience, and zeal, and long suffering to preserve peace and unity; and acquire knowledge, (Bible knowledge,) and that it cannot bear them which are evil; and even tries those that claim to be apostles or ministers, and decides their character and the justice of their claims; all under the eye and with the approbation of Him who is the head of all things to the church.

Now no organization can rise higher in purity, and holiness, and in active works of Christian charity than the constituent members which compose it; so the conduct of the individual members of the church give character to the church.

Church members are so unlike men and women of the world in their conduct, their notions of right and wrong, of truth and falsehood, of good and evil; and in their dealings with mankind—in short, so peculiar—that Christ foretold that they should be hated and persecuted by the world for his sake. The servant is not above his master, as they have hated and persecuted and crucified the Lamb of God, so will they hate and persecute his followers.

Now let us try to make the application. How much of gospel light is sent forth by the churches which constitute the New River Baptist Association? How much are the people within its immediate bounds elevated in morals and religion by the influence of this light? What are the churches doing to raise up the children in the fear and admonition of the Lord? What exercises are going on in the churches that are calculated to keep up that peculiar brotherly love that is to characterize the membership of the churches, and by which we may know that we have passed from death unto life? What are they doing in order to educate the membership, that they may be wise unto salvation, and be prepared for every good word and work; that is, to develop the gifts that may be in the churches, that the churches may be properly officered, and that every member may find his legitimate work: some pastors, some elders, some deacons, some teachers, &c.? Hosea, 4th chapter: Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Isreal: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land; because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, and killing and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore, shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea shall also be taken away. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of God, I will also forget thy children. Here, God says, by the prophet, that his people are destroyed for the lack of knowledge, the knowledge of God, because they have forgotten the law of God. And does any suppose that

we shall escape if we lack this knowledge? (Some men—even of those that claim to be ministers—boast of their ignorance as a qualification to preach the gospel.) We leave such in the hands of God, with the declaration of Hosea thundering in their ears.

How much are the churches of the New River Association doing to send out the light of this gospel to the outside world, to those who have it not? How are they preparing ministers for this or any other purpose? (Ministers must be prepared, they must have knowledge, and their temporal wants must be provided for.) How much are the churches of our Association paying for these purposes? Malachi, 3rd chapter; Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to contain it.—This shows very plainly that no church is properly organized, that has not a store-house (that is a treasury) in which to lay up the contributions of its membership—that which belongs to the Lord—for the purpose of defraying the necessary expenses of his house, that there may be meet in the Lord's house.—Meat for those who minister in spiritual things. If the hands of the minister are defiled with the cares of providing carnal things, how can he be wholly consecrated to spiritual things? Now brethren, can we say with David, I was glad when they said to me let us go up to the house of the Lord to worship? Is it our greatest pleasure and our greatest desire to do the will of the Lord? If the Lord were to question us, as he did Peter, as to whether we love him more than we do our farming interests, our profits, and our gains, and our worldly pleasures, could we say yea Lord thou knowest I love thee more than these? Are our hearts filled with the presence of the Lord when we meet in his sanctuary, and thus the house itself filled with the presence of the Lord, so that even worldly men who assemble with us, are made to feel reverence and awe on account of the sanctifying influence of the Holy Presence? If so, why all this clatter and chatter about our farms, the weather, politics, trade, &c., &c? Why is the house of God converted into a show room, where the giddy and gay assemble to display their gay and fashionable clothing, and to giggle, and gibber, and snigger, and to mock, and scoff at the exercises of the church? Isaiah 3; 4 and 5, And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbor: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honorable.—9, 10 and 11, The shew of thy countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Wo unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves. Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Wo unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him. (I would advise all who read this, to read the whole of the 3rd chapter of Isaiah.) For the prophet had in his eye just such things as have befallen us.

Has not the house of the Lord been made a house of merchandise?—Have not ungodly men been permitted to enter its folds, and to remain therein with all their ungodly words and ungodly practices: trafficking and trading, buying and selling, until the saying of Christ in regard to the temple, may be fitly applied to it? And he said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves. Now brethren, all these things witness against the justness of our claim to be, practically, the churches of Christ—to be *gospel churches.*

What is to be done? Rev. 2: 5.—Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, ex-

cept thou repent. Rev. 3: 2. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

Brethren, let us one and all beseech the Lord, even Christ, that he will overturn the tables of the money changers, and drive out the buyers and sellers; and that he will scourge us up to our duty in the exercise of a wholesome and Godly discipline in the churches, that they may be purged of every thing that is calculated to mar their peace, unity, and prosperity; that the church may truly be the light of the world, and the joy of the whole earth. Better to be scourged by him than to fall into the hands of men to be scourged.

I do not know that I can do better than to close this letter with another quotation from Mr. Mercer. He says: "Let us examine prayerfully and practically, and see if the health of the churches cannot be found in, 1, A more careful regard to *an elevated standard* of faith and piety, in the experience and character of those who are received to membership among us." But to effectuate this, we believe will reqvire, 2. A more careful attention to *the qualifications* and faithfulness of those who are preferred among us to the gospel ministry.

Nothing can be more certain, than if the churches are ever raised to be *holiness unto the Lord*, the ability and fidelity requisite, must be sought in the constitution of ministers. And wherever this is neglected, the consequences must be most deleterious to the purity, unity, and peace of the churches. Let none say, God will qualify his ministers —he will give them *matter and form.* This, we fear, is the very spirit that ruined Isreal; they *cried peace, peace, when there was no peace!* Something must be *practically and efficiently* done to remedy the evils among us. It is now generally conceded, that both miracle and inspiration of the truth, ceased with the Apostles. If so, ministers now have no just dependence on inspiration for what they preach: only as they are instructed to understand the truth, from the inspired Scriptures. This shows the importance of education, which seems to be the Scripture plan." This is it, brethren, this is what we need, education in all the membership of the church—ministers and all. We need to educate one another by advice, by admonition, by brotherly kindness, and charity, by often assembling of ourselves together, and praying with and for one another for our mutual improvement in godliness.— We need the education of all, particularly in the teachings of the holy Scriptures; for they are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

A. M. NUCKOLS.

STATISTICAL TABLE OF THE EIGHTH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE NEW RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

NAMES OF DELE&ATES. (Absentees marked*)	CHURCHES.	PASTORS.	POST OFFICES	District Meetings,	Baptised,	Received by Letter,	Dismissed by Letter	Excluded,	Restored,	Died,	Total,	Minute fund,	Associational Fund,
N B McGlathery, T L Montgomery, W A D Roberts,	Shady Grove,	J E Bell,	Fayette C. H.,	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	56	1 00	50
J A South, J W White, D G Kirkland,	Mt. Pleasant,		" "		0	2	2	0	0	1	48	1 00	1 00
Elder G W Gravlee, Wilson Bell, J Price,* Not represented.	Shepherd, Chapel Hill,	G W Gravlee,	Newtonville,	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	48	1 50	1 00
F M Yerby,* W E Cain, W I Yerby, Not represented.	Pilgrims Rest, New Bethel,	None.			0	0	3	0	0	1	71	95	50 35
Elder J E Bell, A M Nuckols, T J Tate,	Fayetteville,	J E Bell,	Fayette C. H.,	1	3	0	0	2	2	0	0	28	1 50	2 15
J W Howton,* J B Stillman, E B Rushing,*	Rocky Mount,	None.			0	0	6		1	2	27	65	35
Jacob Oswalt, Silas White, E Melton,	Concord,	J M Chism,	Davis Creek,	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	96	1 50	75
I N Ashcraft, W H Brown, J M Daffron,* Not represented.	D'ble Branches, Oak Ridge,	J J Steward,	Cave Springs,	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	16	50 1 00	30
I M Whitney, S A G Winters, J B Watson,	Friendship,	G W Gravlee,	Newtonville,	1	3	0	3	3	0	5	43	1 00	50
Second District.													
Elder J B Ferguson, P M Newton, J Henderson,	Philadelphia,	J B Ferguson,	Handy,		1	0	0	1	0	0	29	1 00	50
Elder M Morris,* S Hollingsworth, W J Stanley,	Union,	E L Westbrook,	New River,	3	11	1	3	0	4	0	74	1 50	50
Elder W L Jones, John Reeves, W B Shirley,	Mt. Olive,	J E Bell,	Fayette C. H.,	4	2	2	15	2	0	0	78	1 75	1 00
M Shira, G S Harris,* A J Reeves,	Mt. Joy,	E L Westbrook,	Mont Calm,	2	0	0	5	0	0	0	37	1 00	50
Elder A M King,* T F Tucker, J E Mills,	Hopewell.	E T Akin.		2	0	4	0	1	0	0	46	1 00	50
Elder J B Huckabee, J M Span, J L McGahee,*	Harmony Grove	J B Huckabee,	Palo,	3	0	3	2	3	0	0	85	1 00	25
W B Taylor, C M Weeks, W A Weeks,*	Oak Grove,	E Charlin,	Mont Calm,	2	6	4	1	1	0	0	31	90	60
S Appling, G T Hassell, James Dickinson,	Mt. Lebanon,	J B Huckabee,	Palo,	1	1	4	2	0	0	0	72	2 00	50